



No. 256 Rs. 3.00

Sakhi Sarwar

A FOLKTALE FROM PUNJAB



The folktales of a country reflect the spirit of its rural life. They are simple but yet not entirely devoid of art.

For dramatic effect, the bards who sing the folktales often turn history and geography upside down. Two kings who lived two hundred years apart become contemporaries and are made blood brothers. A well-known bridge across one river is shifted to a completely different stream.

The folktales of the Punjab, including the regions now in Pakistan; also have this interesting aspect—a delightful blend of Hindu-Muslim traditions. A Muslim governor sends a wedding proposal through a Brahmana; a Hindu saint invokes God with the word 'Rab'; a Muslim bride wears the vermillion powder on her forehead—an essentially Hindu custom.

Darkness has fallen. As the moon rises silently over the Indus and the Ravi, over the huts and the fields of long-eared wheat, the peasants gather round the bard. The bard tunes his instrument and begins to sing...

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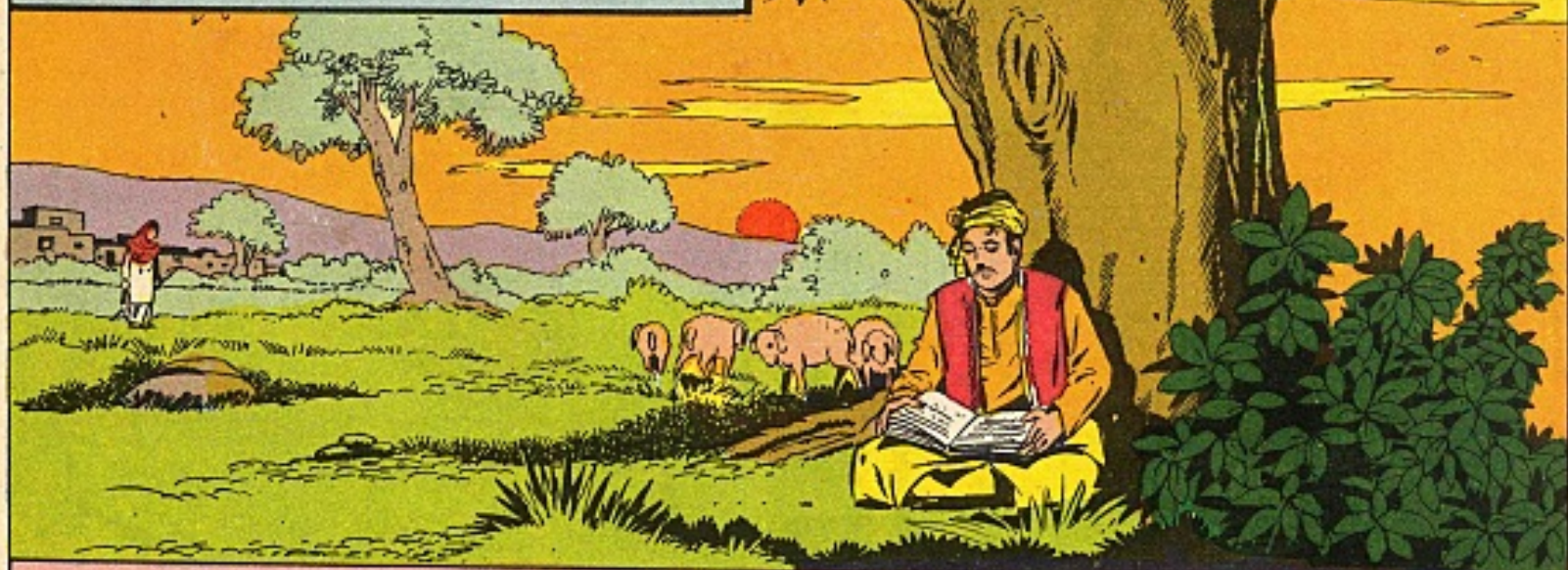
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SAKHI SARWAR



ABOUT TWELVE MILES FROM MULTAN LIES THE VILLAGE OF GARH KOT. HERE LIVED SAYYID AHMED, OR SAKHI SARWAR, WITH HIS MOTHER, HIS FATHER AND HIS THREE STEP-BROTHERS. PIOUS AND GENEROUS, HE WAS CONSIDERED A SAINT.



AT HOME —

HERE THEY
COME AT LAST,
MOTHER AND
SON!

IF THERE'S
ONE PERSON
I REALLY HATE,
IT'S SAYYID.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
I WISH YOU HADN'T
WAITED FOR ME.

EAT, MY SONS.
I'LL SERVE YOU.

NO, MOTHER, THAT'S
ENOUGH FOR ME. MY
BROTHERS HAVE
HEALTHY APPETITES.
LET THEM HAVE
MORE.

THAT'S FINE
BY US.

IF HE WANTS
TO STARVE,
LET HIM
STARVE.

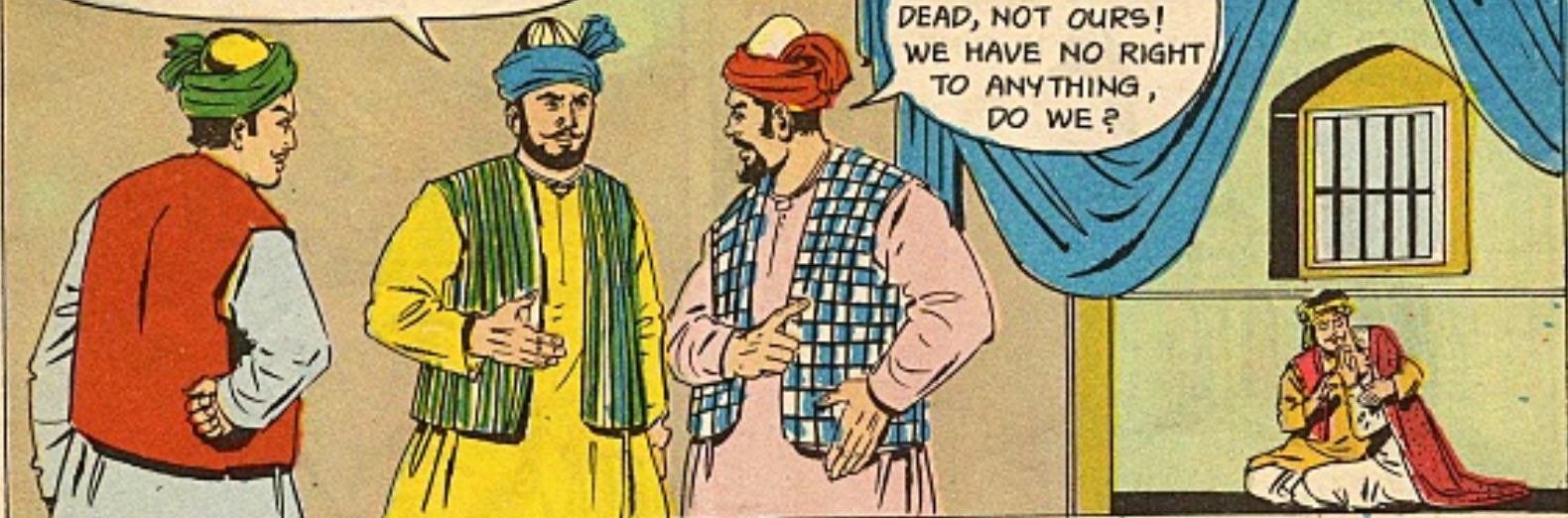
ONE DAY —

OH, SAYYID, YOUR
GRANDFATHER IS DEAD.
O WOEFUL DAY THAT
TOOK MY BELOVED
FATHER FROM ME.

DO NOT WEEP,
MOTHER. IT IS TO
ALLAH'S KINGDOM
HE HAS GONE.

SO SAYYID'S RICH GRANDFATHER IS DEAD! GOOD! IS THERE ANYTHING IN IT FOR US?

FOR US? IT'S HIS MOTHER'S FATHER WHO IS DEAD, NOT OURS! WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO ANYTHING, DO WE?



SAYYID IS A FOOL. I DON'T MIND BECOMING RICH AT HIS EXPENSE!

FIRST, LET ME MAKE MY EYES RED... WITH WEEPING...

EXCELLENT! YOU'LL MAKE A FINE ACTOR.

GO TO THEM AND TRY YOUR LUCK.



SAYYID, MOTHER... WHAT A SAD DAY THIS IS... MY HEART BREAKS WITH SORROW...

BUT WHAT MAKES ME EVEN SADDER IS THAT SAYYID WILL SOON BE FAR FROM US...

I? FAR FROM YOU, MY DEAR BROTHER...?



YOU WILL NOW OWN
YOUR GRANDFATHER'S
VAST LANDS AND...YOU
WILL FORGET YOUR POOR
BROTHERS WHO LOVE
YOU SO MUCH.

HOW CAN YOU
SAY SUCH A
THING? ALL THAT
IS MINE IS YOURS.

AHA! I'VE
GOT HIM!



YOU WERE ALWAYS GENEROUS,
SAYYID. I KNOW YOU WILL
SHARE YOUR PROSPERITY WITH
US. BUT YOU KNOW SO LITTLE
ABOUT THESE THINGS...IF...IF
YOU LET ME DIVIDE
THE LAND...

CERTAINLY! TAKE IT
ALL. YOU DO THE
ALLOTING. I KNOW
I CAN TRUST YOU.

MAY YOU LIVE
LONG! MAY ALLAH
ALWAYS PROTECT
YOU!



SOON —

I AM THE
ELDEST. THIS
PLOT IS MINE!

NO, IT'S
MINE...

I CHOSE
IT FIRST!



BROTHERS,
BROTHERS! LET'S
NOT QUARREL! WE
HAVE CHOSEN THE MOST
BARREN STRIP OF LAND
FOR SAYYID. DOESN'T
THAT SATISFY YOU?

OH, YES,
YES...

WE'LL BE
HAPPY WITH
OUR SHARE.

A LITTLE LATER —

HAVE YOU
DIVIDED
THE LAND,
MY BROTHER?

YES, SAYYID.
THAT BEAUTI-
FUL PLOT
THERE IS
FOR YOU.

YOU SEEM TO
HAVE GIVEN ME A
VERY FERTILE STRIP.
I HOPE YOU HAVE
BEEN FAIR TO
YOURSELVES.

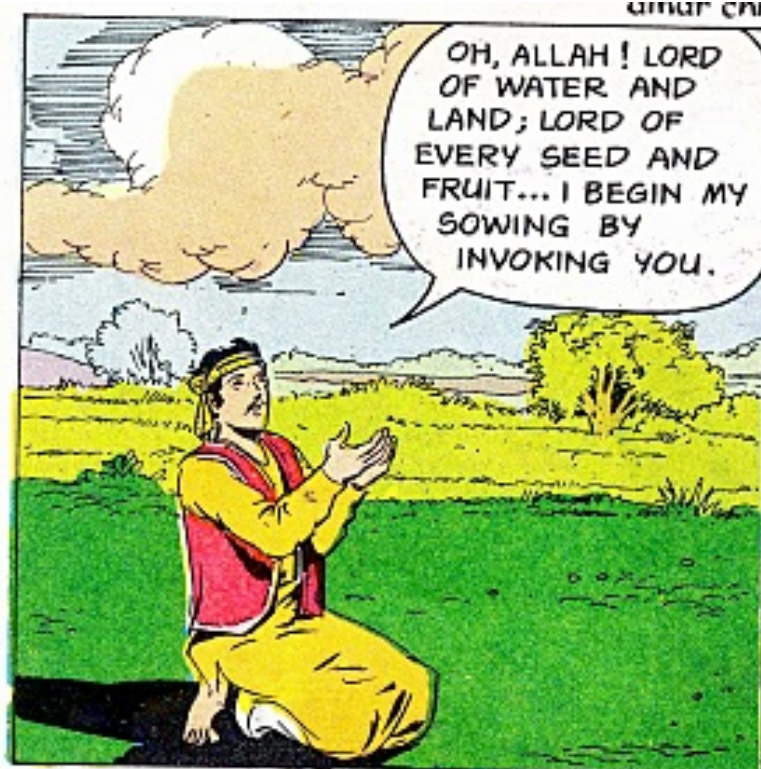
THE FOOL
DOESN'T KNOW
A THING ABOUT
AGRICULTURE!

IN THE SOWING SEASON —

THERE'S SAYYID,
PRAYING AS USUAL!
PRAY AWAY, STEP-BROTHER.
YOU WILL BE LUCKY
IF YOU GET EVEN A
HARVEST OF THORNS.

HA, HA,
HA!

HO, HO,
HO!

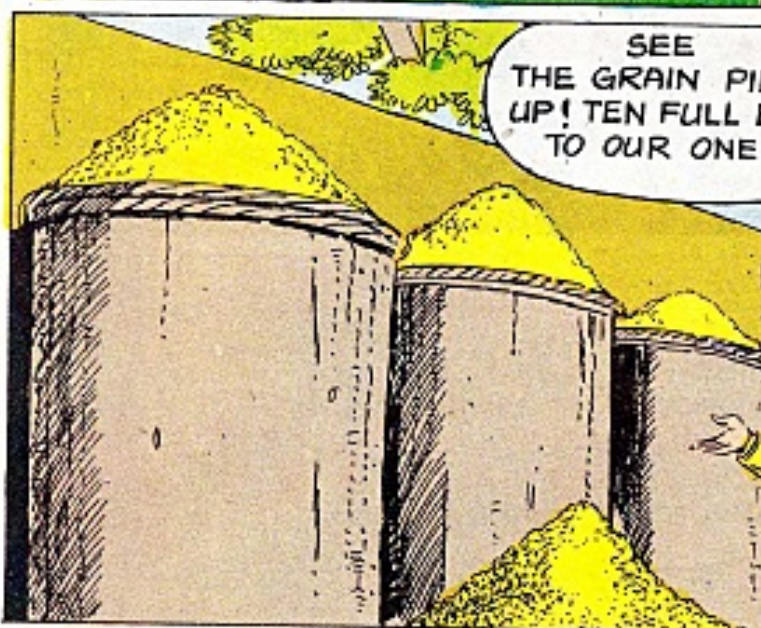


OH, ALLAH! LORD OF WATER AND LAND; LORD OF EVERY SEED AND FRUIT... I BEGIN MY SOWING BY INVOKING YOU.

AND AS THE RAIN AND THE SUN RIPENED THE CROPS—



LOOK AT SAYYID'S PLOT. I... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!



SEE THE GRAIN PILED UP! TEN FULL BINS TO OUR ONE!

IT'S YOUR FAULT...

YOU ALLOTTED THE LAND...



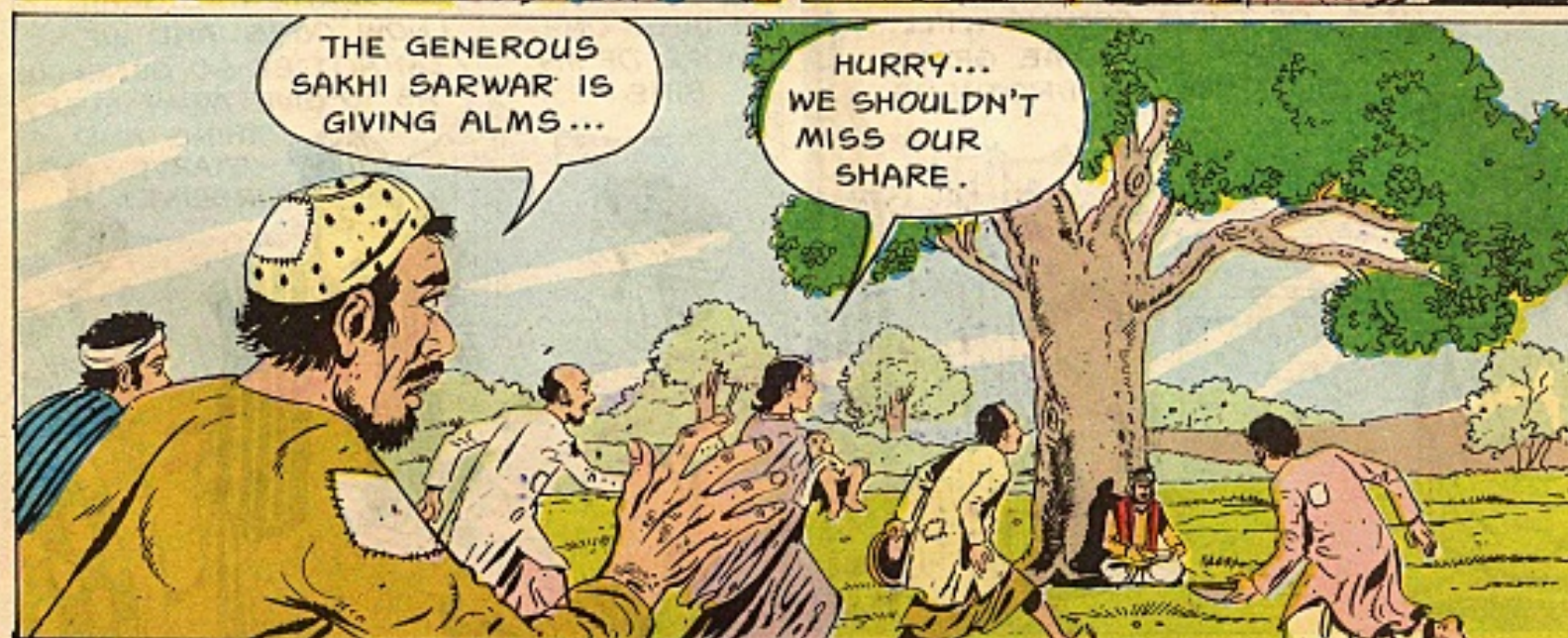
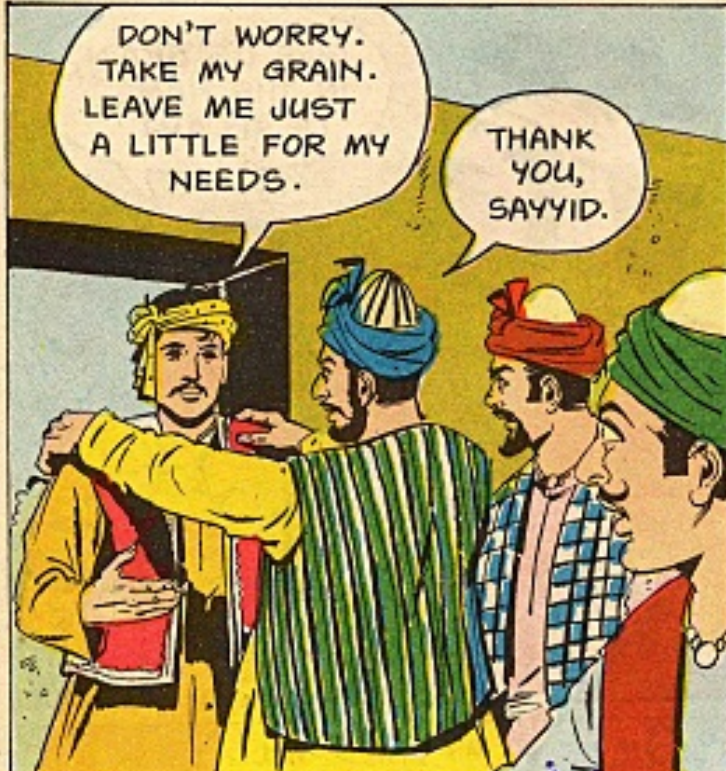
WAIT!... I GOT THE LAND FROM SAYYID, DIDN'T I? WHAT'S GOING TO STOP ME FROM GETTING HIS GRAIN NOW... AND RUINING HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL?

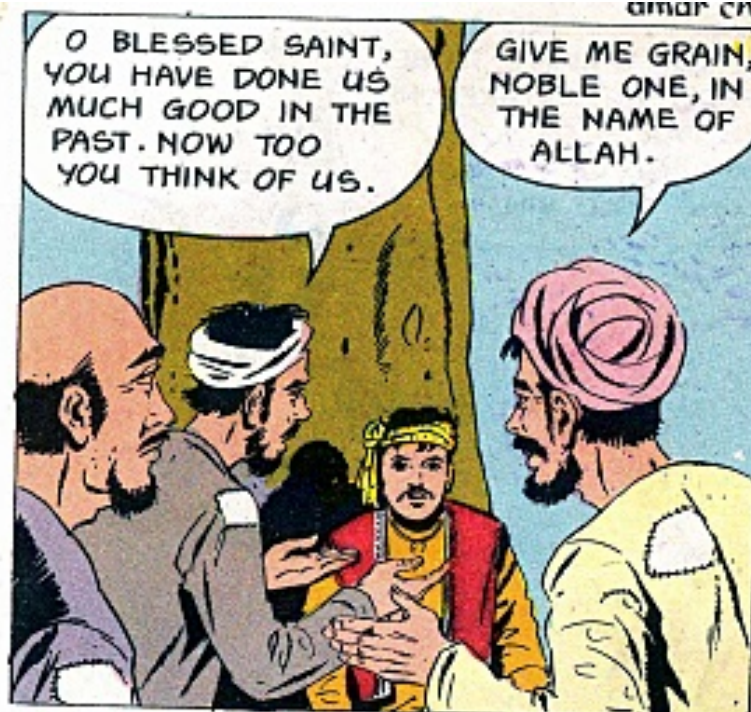


SOON —

SAYYID, WE ARE LOST! OH, WE ARE LOST! OUR CROP WAS A FAILURE...

WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SHOW OUR FACES IN THE TOWN.



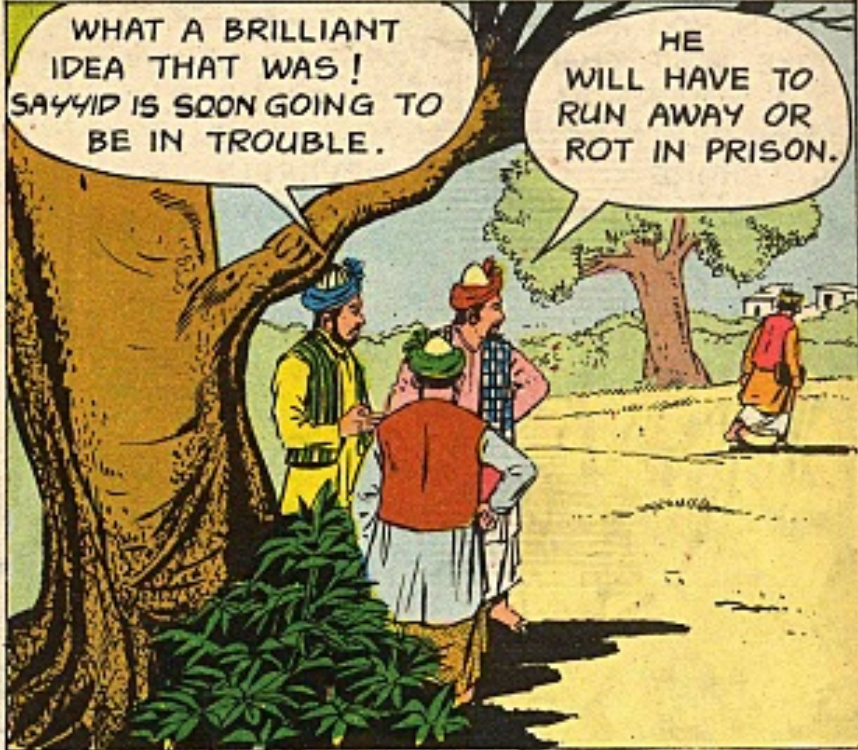


FRIENDS, SAKHI SARWAR'S GRAIN IS EXHAUSTED. YOU MAY ALL LEAVE.



WHAT A BRILLIANT IDEA THAT WAS! SAYYID IS SOON GOING TO BE IN TROUBLE.

HE WILL HAVE TO RUN AWAY OR ROT IN PRISON.



A FEW DAYS LATER—

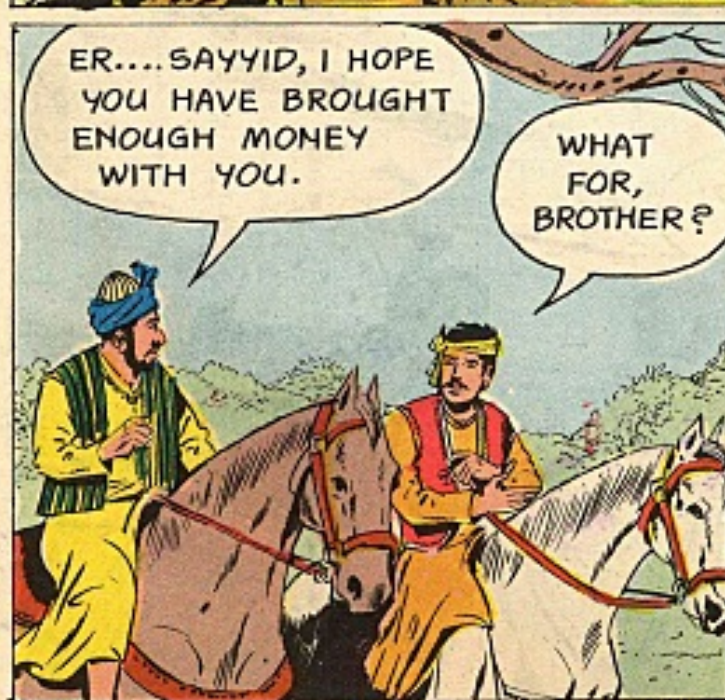
WE HAVE ALMOST REACHED MULTAN.

AND LOOK AT SAYYID, RIDING ALONG SO INNOCENTLY. LET'S BREAK IT TO HIM NOW.



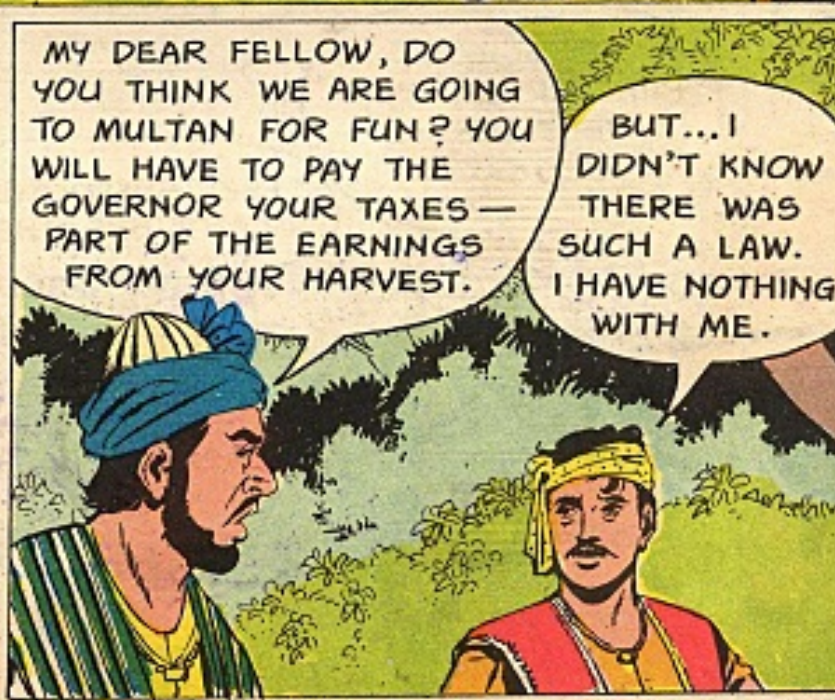
ER... SAYYID, I HOPE YOU HAVE BROUGHT ENOUGH MONEY WITH YOU.

WHAT FOR, BROTHER?



MY DEAR FELLOW, DO YOU THINK WE ARE GOING TO MULTAN FOR FUN? YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY THE GOVERNOR YOUR TAXES—PART OF THE EARNINGS FROM YOUR HARVEST.

BUT... I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS SUCH A LAW. I HAVE NOTHING WITH ME.



THEN YOU MUST
TAKE YOUR CHANCE.
THE GOVERNOR
MAY REMIT YOUR
SHARE ...

...OR, ON THE
OTHER HAND, HE
MAY PUNISH YOU
SEVERELY. WHO
KNOWS?

OH GOD! IN
THINKING OF YOU ALL
THE TIME, I HAVE
LEARNT NOTHING OF
PRACTICAL THINGS.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN
TO ME NOW?

AND SUDDENLY —

DO YOU SEE
THOSE PEOPLE?
WHERE DID THEY
'SPRING FROM?

MORE AND MORE ARE
JOINING THEM AND THEY
ALL SEEM TO BE
FOLLOWING SAYYID.

THIS IS
RIDICULOUS! THEY
HAVE BLOCKED
THE STREETS!

I FEEL SUFFOCATED!
I CAN'T BREATHE!

MEANWHILE, AT THE HOUSE OF GHANU,
THE GOVERNOR OF MULTAN —

WHAT'S GOING
ON DOWN
THERE ?

I'VE NEVER
SEEN SUCH
A THROG
BEFORE.

GO... GO
QUICKLY ! SEE
WHAT'S HAPPENING...
ALERT OUR
ARMY...

HALT ! WHO ARE
YOU ? WHAT IS
YOUR BUSINESS
IN THIS CITY ?

SIR, WE ARE
FOLLOWERS OF THIS
SAINT, SAKHI SARWAR.

HE MUST BE A
TRULY GREAT SAINT
TO HAVE SUCH A
MULTITUDE OF
FOLLOWERS.

SIR, SIR... YOU
WON'T NEED YOUR
SWORD. IT'S ONLY
A SAINT WHO IS
VISITING MULTAN
WITH HIS
FOLLOWERS.



WH...WHAT IS
THIS ?!

AH! REFRESHING
RICE AND MILK AND
CLEAR, COOL WATER!
I WILL HAVE A LITTLE.
TAKE BACK THE
REST.



HMMM. I CAN GUESS WHAT
HAS HAPPENED. O ALLAH,
YOU ANSWER THE PRAYERS
OF ALL — EVEN THOSE OF
A HUMBLE SERVANT.

HE IS EATING
SOMETHING!
AM...AM
I SEEING
RIGHT ?



SOON —

HERE, SIR.
THE SAINT HAS
SENT THIS
BACK.

THE EMPTY
VESSELS ARE
FILLED TO THE BRIM.
HE IS INDEED
A TRUE SAINT!



GO — INVITE THE NOBLE ONE INTO THE HOUSE.

O SAINT, ACCEPT FROM ME THIS PURSE OF A LAKH AND A QUARTER RUPEES, A HORSE AND ROBES OF HONOUR.

I THANK YOU, SIR.



GUARDS, THROW THEM INTO PRISON AT ONCE!

LATER —

THERE GOES THE SAINT — BACK TO HIS HOMETOWN.

BUT HE'S TAKING THE WRONG ROAD. HE'S GOING TOWARDS THE TOWN PRISON!

O WARDEN, MY BROTHERS ARE HERE IN YOUR PRISON. I REQUEST YOU TO RELEASE THEM.

YOU STILL LOVE THEM! IN SPITE OF THEIR WICKEDNESS! I WON'T REFUSE YOU. HERE ARE THE KEYS— RELEASE THE ONES THAT ARE YOUR BROTHERS.

ALL OF THEM ARE MY BROTHERS. I WILL NOT MOVE FROM HERE TILL THEY ARE ALL RELEASED.

I HAD BETTER TELL THE GOVERNOR TO COME AND SEE ABOUT THIS HIMSELF.

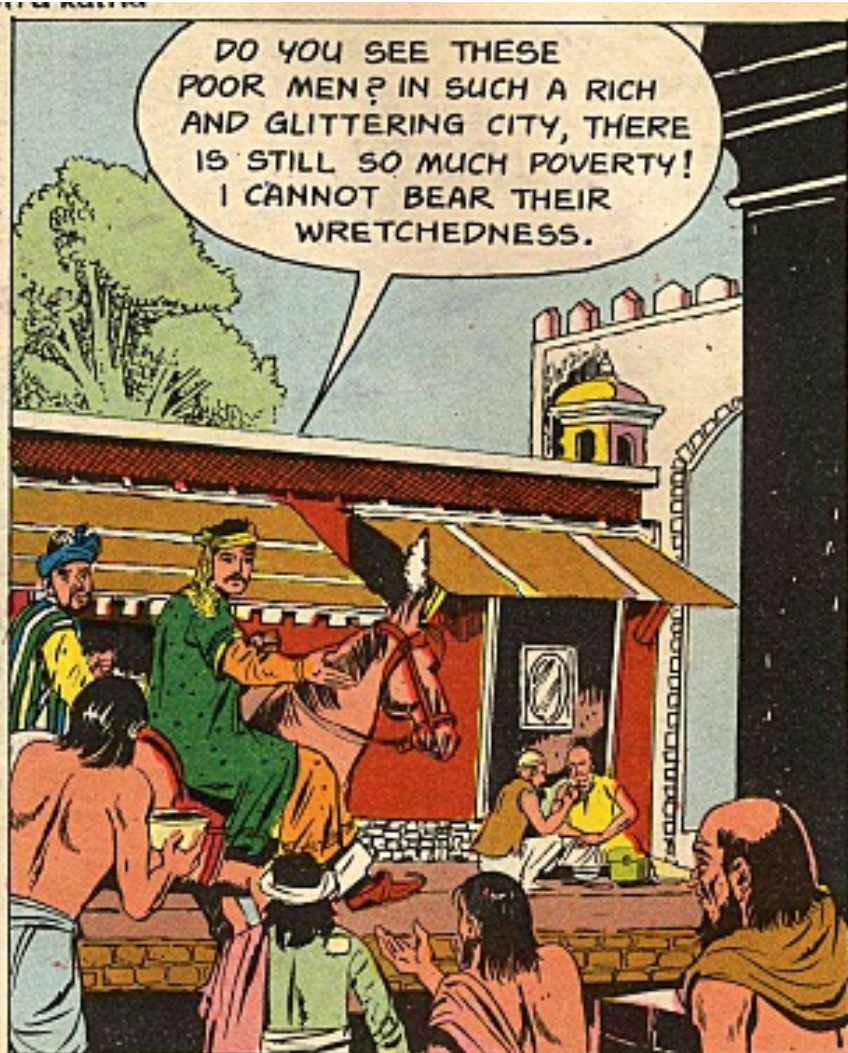
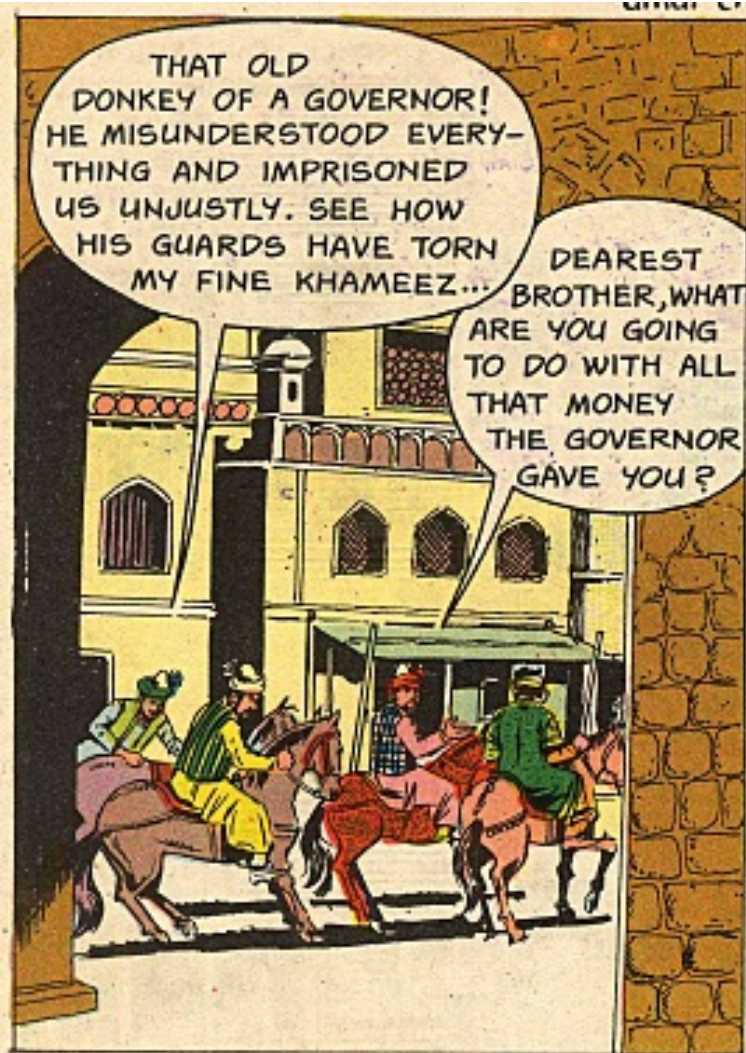
SOON—

YES, WARDEN, LET THEM ALL GO. WHEN THE SAINT HIMSELF HAS DEMANDED THEIR RELEASE, WHAT CAN I SAY? THEY ARE ALL PARDONED.

THAT OLD
DONKEY OF A GOVERNOR!
HE MISUNDERSTOOD EVERY-
THING AND IMPRISONED
US UNJUSTLY. SEE HOW
HIS GUARDS HAVE TORN
MY FINE KHOMEEZ...

DEAREST
BROTHER, WHAT
ARE YOU GOING
TO DO WITH ALL
THAT MONEY
THE GOVERNOR
GAVE YOU?

DO YOU SEE THESE
POOR MEN? IN SUCH A RICH
AND GLITTERING CITY, THERE
IS STILL SO MUCH POVERTY!
I CANNOT BEAR THEIR
WRETCHEDNESS.



THE NEXT MORNING —

SIRS, TAKE THIS
BAG OF MONEY. YOU, MY
FRIEND BARBER, GIVE ALL
THE BEGGARS IN THE TOWN
A GOOD SHAVE. LET THEM
BE FRESH AND CLEAN..

BUT...
BUB-BUB
BROTHER...

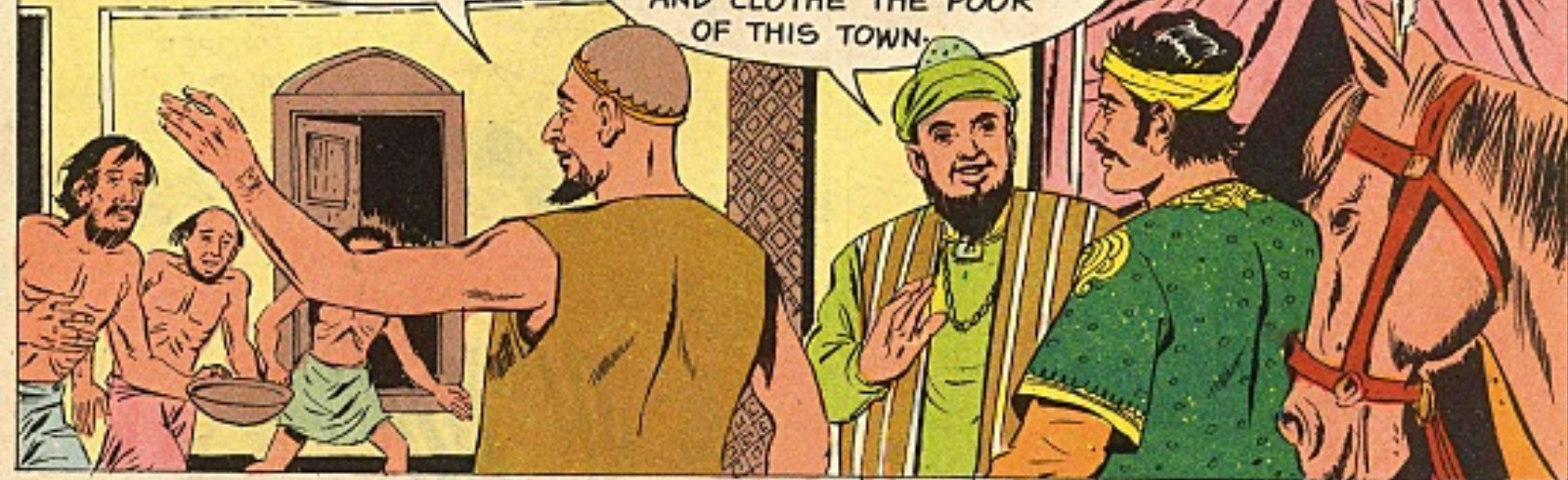


AND YOU, CLOTHES-MERCHANT,
CLOTHE THEM ALL. LET THEIR
BODIES BE PROTECTED FROM
THE COLD WINDS OF THE
NIGHT.



COME HERE, ALL OF YOU. CALL YOUR OTHER FRIENDS TOO.

WE ASSURE YOU, GREAT SAINT, EVERY COIN IN THIS BAG WILL BE USED TO FEED AND CLOTHE THE POOR OF THIS TOWN.



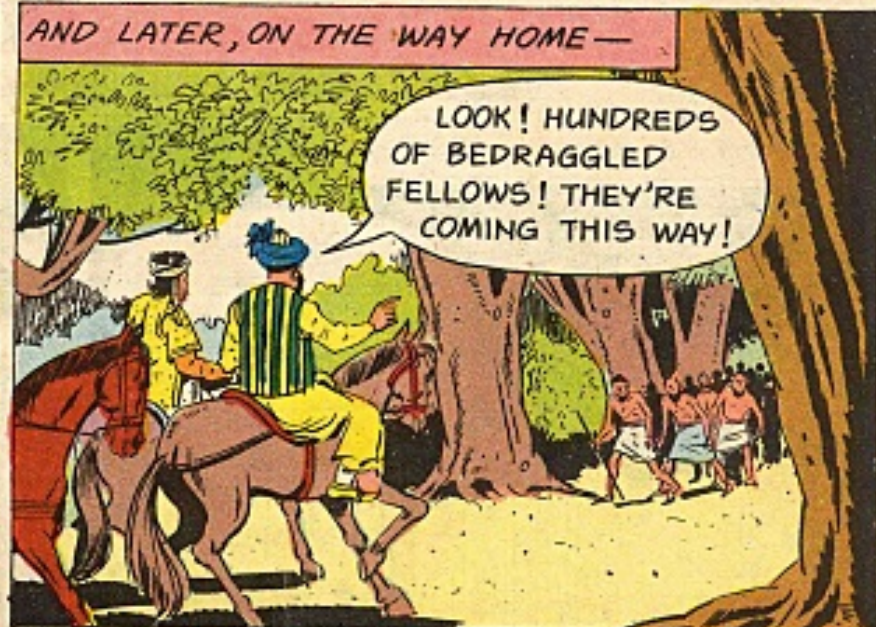
A LAKH AND A QUARTER RUPEES...

... ALL GONE...



AND LATER, ON THE WAY HOME—

LOOK! HUNDREDS OF BEDRAGGLED FELLOWS! THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY!



WHO ARE YOU?

WE ARE FAKIRS, SIR—THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY OF US. WE HAVE JUST BROKEN A TWELVE-YEAR-LONG FAST. NOW HUNGER DRIVES US TO THE CITY.



TWELVE YEARS! NO WONDER THEY LOOK LIKE RUNAWAY SCARECROWS!

THESE ARE DEVOUT MEN OF GOD. I SEE DIVINE HUNGER IN THEIR EYES.



TAKE MY HORSE,
GOOD FAKIRS. AND
THESE CLOTHES. SELL
THEM IN MULTAN
FOR FOOD.

ARE YOU AN
ANGEL SENT BY
GOD TO CARE
FOR US, NOBLE
ONE?

MAY A THOUSAND
BLESSINGS RAIN
ON YOU.

YOU ARE BACK
WHERE YOU STARTED,
SAYYID. YOU HAVE
PARTED WITH TRULY
VALUABLE GIFTS.

THEY WERE UN-
NECESSARY AND
USELESS TO ME.
THE FAKIRS WILL
MAKE PROPER
USE OF THEM.



BUT A LITTLE WHILE LATER —

NOBLE ONE!
NOBLE ONE! STOP!
TAKE BACK YOUR
KIND GIFTS.



NO ONE IN MULTAN WANTS
TO BUY THEM, FOR THEY
SAY THEY FEAR THE
GOVERNOR WHO GAVE
THEM TO YOU.



HOW MUCH LONGER
WILL YOU BEAR YOUR
HUNGER? USE THE
HORSE ITSELF THEN,
FOR MEAT AND TEAR
UP THE ROBES
FOR CLOTHES.



NO JOY IS GREATER
THAN TO SEE HUNGRY
MOUTHS BREAK INTO
SMILES. DON'T YOU AGREE,
MY BROTHERS?





WAIT, WAIT,
SAKHI SARWAR! WAIT
TILL THE GOVERNOR
HEARS OF THIS!

COME ON!
WE'LL TELL
HIM EVERY-
THING.



ER...SAYYID, WE HAVE
FORGOTTEN A WALLET OF
MONEY BACK IN MULTAN. WE
THREE WILL GO
BACK FOR IT.

ALL RIGHT,
BROTHER. I WILL
RETURN HOME SO
THAT FATHER WILL
NOT WORRY
ABOUT US.



AND LATER, IN MULTAN —

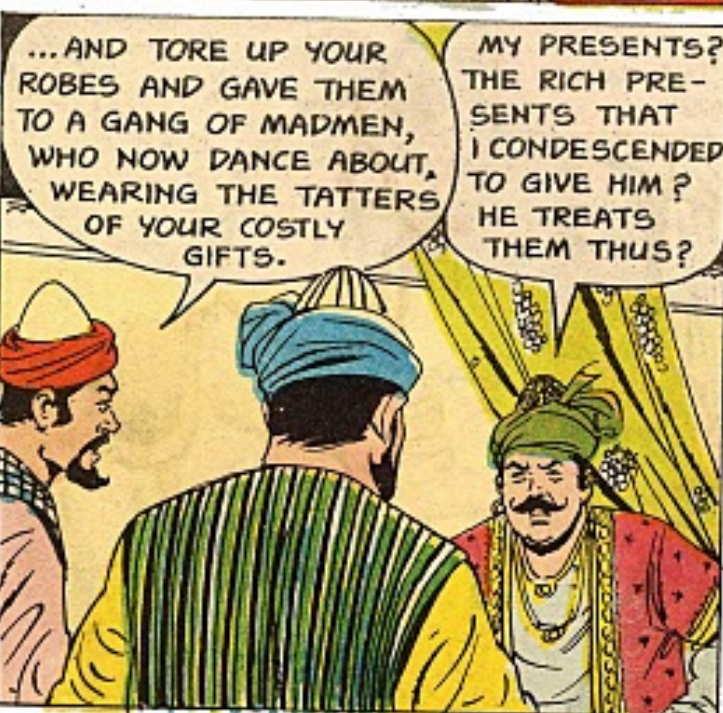
O HONoured GOVERNOR,
YOU RESPECT SAKHI SARWAR.
BUT LET NOT YOUR
RESPECT BE GIVEN
IN VAIN.

WE ARE HIS
BROTHERS. WE
KNOW HIM IN HIS
TRUE COLOURS.



YOU THREE JACKALS
AT IT AGAIN? WHAT
IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

DO YOU KNOW WHAT
HE HAS DONE? HE
SLAUGHTERED YOUR
FINE HORSE...



...AND TORE UP YOUR
ROBES AND GAVE THEM
TO A GANG OF MADMEN,
WHO NOW DANCE ABOUT,
WEARING THE TATTERS
OF YOUR COSTLY
GIFTS.

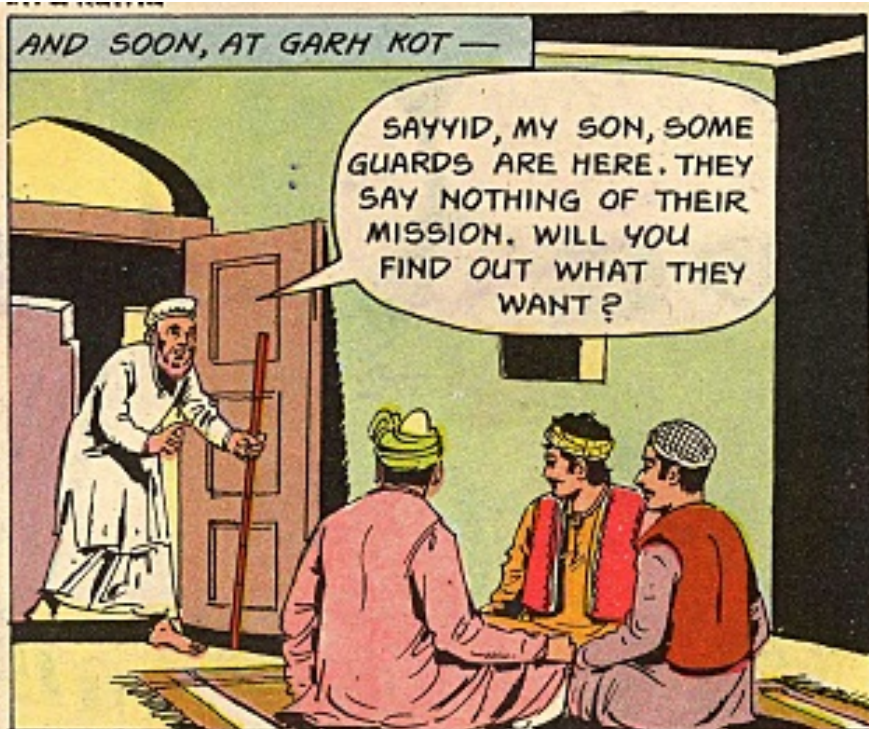
MY PRESENTS?
THE RICH PRE-
SENTS THAT
I CONDESCENDED
TO GIVE HIM? HE TREATS
THEM THUS?



GUARDS!



GO AT ONCE
TO GARH KOT!
ASK THAT FAKE
SAINT TO RETURN
MY GIFTS!



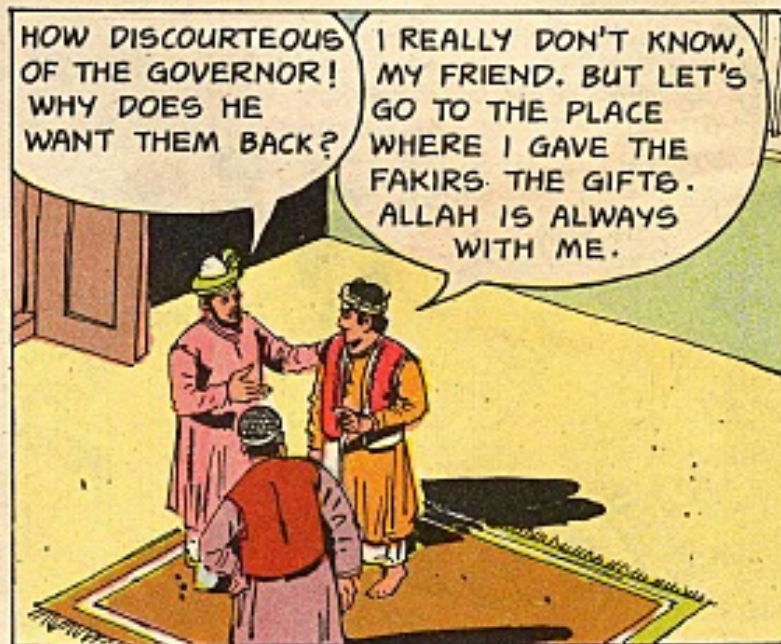
AND SOON, AT GARH KOT —

SAYYID, MY SON, SOME
GUARDS ARE HERE. THEY
SAY NOTHING OF THEIR
MISSION. WILL YOU
FIND OUT WHAT THEY
WANT?



WHY DO YOU STAND
TONGUE-TIED? DON'T
FEEL AWKWARD. TELL
ME WHAT IT IS.

O GREAT SAINT...
WE...I... THE GOVERNOR
...HE WANTS ... HIS
GIFTS BACK.



HOW DISCOURTEOUS
OF THE GOVERNOR!
WHY DOES HE
WANT THEM BACK?

I REALLY DON'T KNOW,
MY FRIEND. BUT LET'S
GO TO THE PLACE
WHERE I GAVE THE
FAKIRS THE GIFTS.
ALLAH IS ALWAYS
WITH ME.

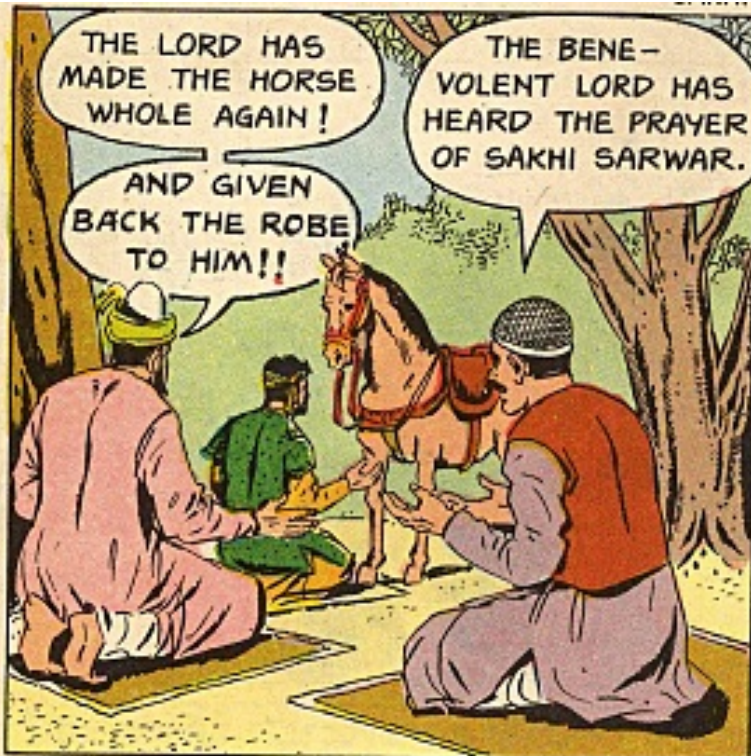


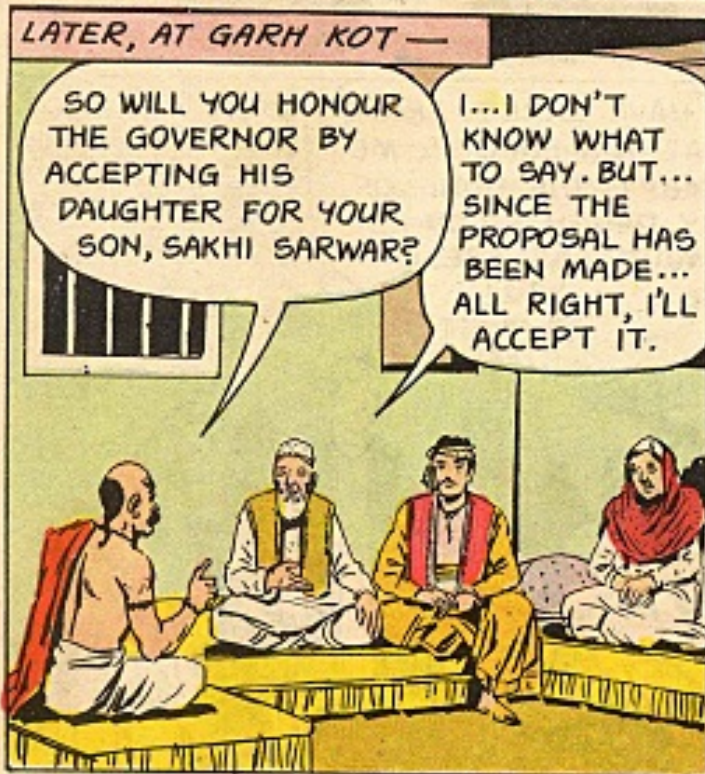
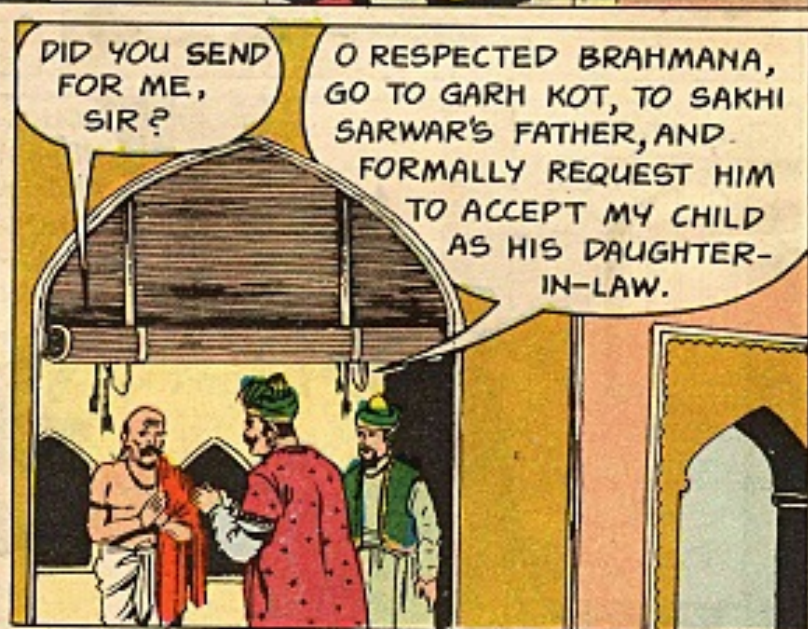
SOON —

OH ALLAH, I COVER
THE REMNANTS OF
THE HORSE AND THE
ROBES WITH THIS
SHEET. COME TO THE
AID OF ONE THAT
LOVES YOU.



AND THE NEXT
INSTANT —





AND SOON, AT GHANU'S —

THE WEDDING
IS FIXED! AHA! IT
WILL BE A WEDDING
THAT NO ONE IN
MULTAN HAS SEEN
THE LIKE OF!

INSTRUCT THE
INNKEEPERS AND
CONFECTIONERS
THAT ALL FOOD
BOUGHT BY ANY-
ONE IN MULTAN,
SHOULD BE
CHARGED TO ME.

THE VERY SAINTS AND GODS
SHALL ATTEND THE WEDDING.
SEND OUT INVITATIONS TO ALL,
EVEN THOSE VILLAINOUS
BROTHERS! TWENTY-FIVE
THOUSAND SHALL BE FED
AT THE FEAST.



AND ON THE WEDDING DAY —

HERE
COMES THE
BRIDEGROOM.

I WAS AFRAID THE PROCESSION
WOULD CONSIST OF THE SAINT'S
RAGGED, FAKIR FRIENDS. BUT
SEE, SAKHI SARWAR HAS BROUGHT
A DECENT, WELL-DRESSED
CROWD. MY PRESTIGE
WILL NOT BE LOWER-
ED AFTER ALL.

THE HOLY BHAIRON AND
THE HOLY HANWANT THEM-
SELVES ARE PROVIDING THE
MUSIC TO USHER THE
BRIDEGROOM INTO HIS
FATHER-IN-LAW'S
CITY.

BUT JUST THEN —

ALL IS LOST !
ALL IS LOST,
O HONOURED ONE!
O WOE ! O MISFOR-
TUNE !

STOP, FOOL ! DON'T
USE SUCH INAUSPI-
CIOUS WORDS ON
SUCH AN AUSPICIOUS
DAY ! WHAT IS IT ?
WHAT IS IT ?

OH, WHAT A DAY YOU
HAVE CHOSEN FOR THE
WEDDING. DON'T YOU
KNOW ? WE ARE IN THE
MONTH OF RAMZAAAN
AND IT IS EKADASHI
TODAY.

RAMZAAAN?
EKADASHI?
TODAY ? OH,
NO ! NO !

HOW CAN THE
MUSSALMANS AND
THE HINDUS
EAT TODAY ?

ALL IS LOST
...ALL IS LOST...
O WOE !
O MISFORTUNE !

JUST THEN —

WHAT IS IT,
O GHANU?
YOU SEEM
UPSET.

NONE OF THE
TWENTY-FIVE
THOUSAND PEOPLE
I EXPECTED TO FEED
WILL COME BECAUSE
OF THE FAST.



DO NOT GRIEVE. THE ELDERS
MAY HAVE TO OBSERVE THE
FAST. BUT BHAIRON AND
I ARE ONLY CHILDREN. WE
CAN BE EXCUSED FROM
IT.

YES,
WE WILL
EAT. SERVE
US.

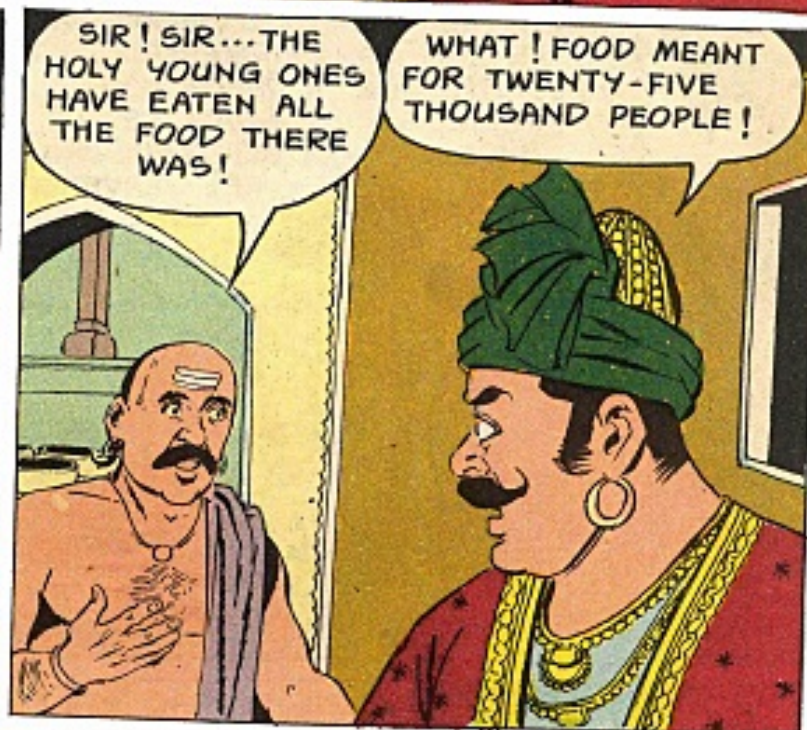


AND SO —



SIR! SIR... THE
HOLY YOUNG ONES
HAVE EATEN ALL
THE FOOD THERE
WAS!

WHAT! FOOD MEANT
FOR TWENTY-FIVE
THOUSAND PEOPLE!



I STILL HAVE
SOME SPACE
LEFT.

I COULD DO WITH A COUPLE
OF MORE HELPINGS OF
SWEETS, PERHAPS...



THAT WAS A
FINE FEAST.
MAY WE HAVE
SOME MORE,
SIR?

AND TO THINK I WAS
AFRAID THE FOOD
WOULD GO WASTE.

FORGIVE ME, HOLY
ONES. I REGRET TO SAY
...THERE IS NO MORE.
WE ...

OH, THAT
DOESN'T MATTER.
ONE SHOULD
NOT OVEREAT.

AND SO —

NOW, MY
WIFE, YOU MAY
DECORATE OUR
PRECIOUS
JEWEL.

COME, MY DARLING
DAUGHTER. LET ME
DRESS YOU UP. YOU
SHALL BE THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL BRIDE
THE HEAVENS
EVER BEHELD.

LET ME PUT THESE
EARRINGS SHAPED
LIKE PIPAL LEAVES
IN YOUR EARS...

...THESE FLORAL
RINGS ON YOUR
FAIR, SLENDER
FINGERS...

...THESE STARRY
DIAMONDS IN YOUR
LONG DARK TRESSES...

...THIS GOLDEN
THREAD WITH MOON-
WHITE PEARLS ON
YOUR DELICATE
CHEEK...

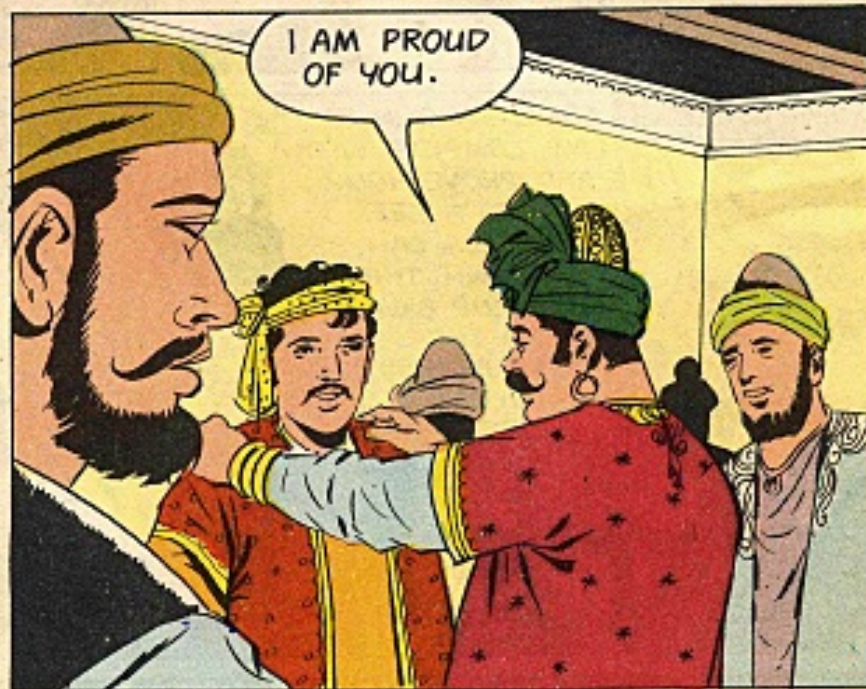
...AND THE
VERMILION SPOT
OF WIFEHOOD
ON YOUR
FOREHEAD.

MEANWHILE—

COME, MY SON-IN-
LAW. COMPETE WITH
ME AND PROVE YOUR
WORTH. LET'S SEE
WHICH OF US CAN
SHOOT DOWN THAT
BRASS CUP BALANC-
ED ON THE
SEVEN BAMBOO
POLES.

I'LL TRY
FIRST.

OH... I'VE
MISSED!



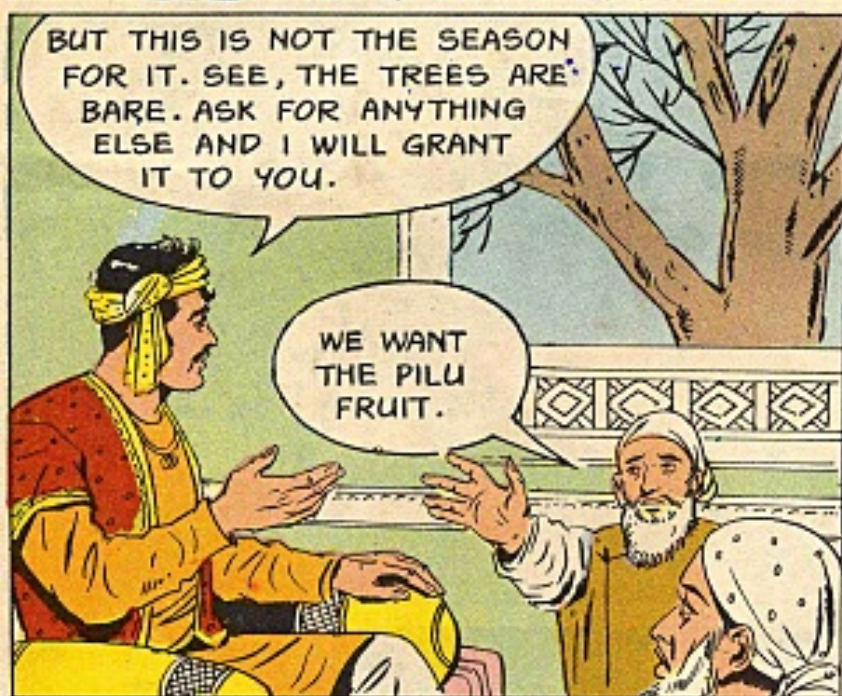
O SAKHI SARWAR, BEFORE WE START WE WOULD LIKE TO EAT THE SWEET PILU FRUIT AND SWEETEN OUR MUSIC THE MORE FOR YOU.

YES, O SAINT, GIVE US THE PILU FRUIT.



BUT THIS IS NOT THE SEASON FOR IT. SEE, THE TREES ARE BARE. ASK FOR ANYTHING ELSE AND I WILL GRANT IT TO YOU.

WE WANT THE PILU FRUIT.



OH MY LORD, WHAT SHOULD I DO? I DON'T WISH TO SEE ANYONE UNHAPPY ON MY WEDDING DAY.

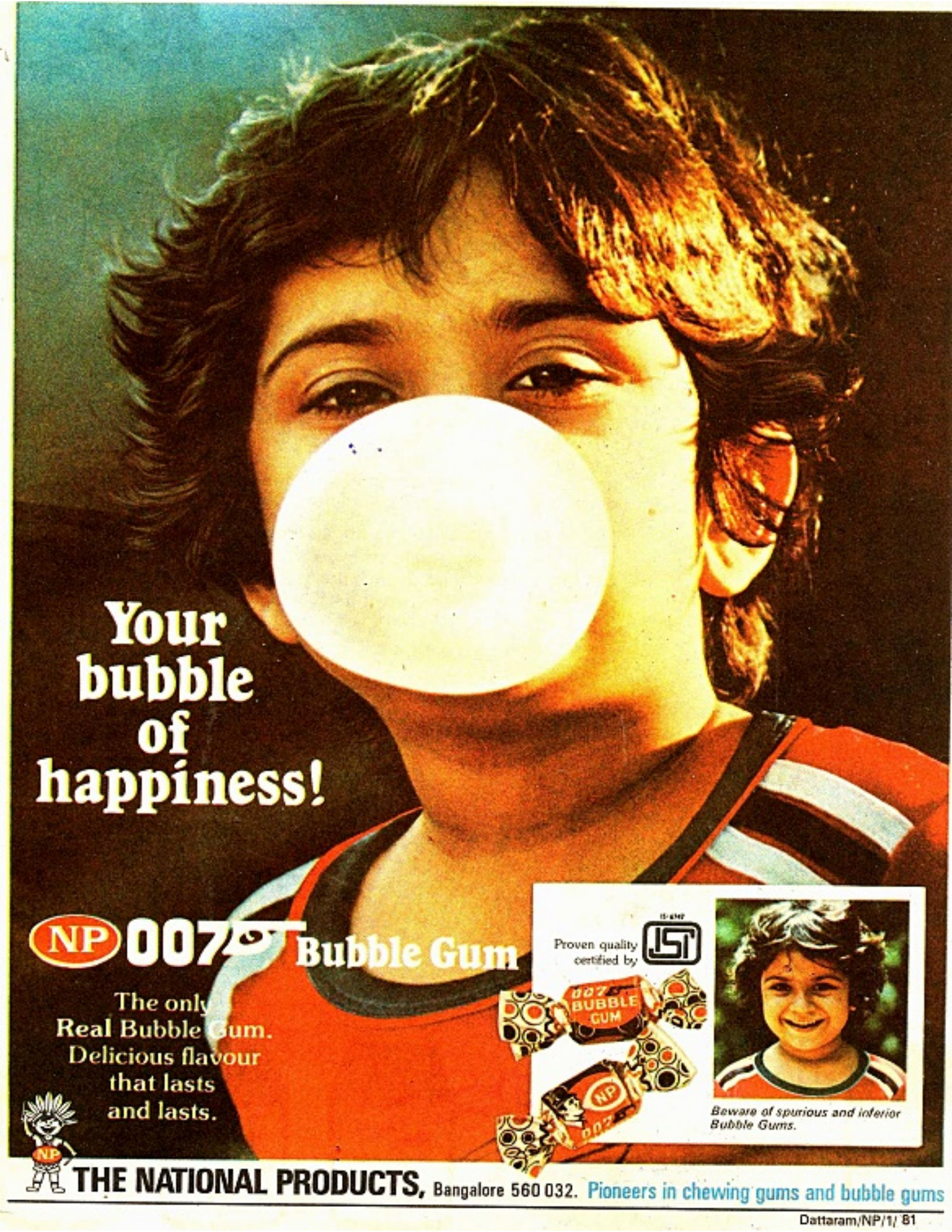


AND SUDDENLY —

LOOK! THE PILU TREES ... LEAVES ARE SPROUTING ON THEM.







**Your
bubble
of
happiness!**

NP 007 Bubble Gum

The only
Real Bubble Gum.
Delicious flavour
that lasts
and lasts.



Proven quality
certified by



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